Rail projects

†1293. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals regarding new railway projects submitted by the States as on date during the last three years;

(b) the details of new/current/pending railway projects and surveys, State-wise and the current status thereof; project-wise; and

(c) the details of amount allocated for each of these project and the amount spent on them so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Railway lines upto Lumbini and Kushinagar

1294. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) at what stage the requests regarding railway lines upto Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha and Kushinagar in U.P. where Lord Buddha achieved Mahaparinirvan is pending.

(b) whether his Ministry has sent required report to the External Affairs Ministry as far as Lumbini is concerned; and

(c) whether it is a fact that survey work for Kushinagar is already completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) For rail connectivity between Kushinagar and Deoria Sadar, an updating survey has been completed recently as per which the cost of construction of 39.25 kms long line has been assessed as Rs. 150.98 crore with negative rate of return. State Government of Uttar Pradesh has been requested to share at least 50% cost of the project. As regard rail connectivity to Lumbini (Nepal), the matter has been referred to Ministry of External Affairs for comments.

Construction of railway lines in hilly areas

†1295. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of railway lines in kilometre constructed after the freedom of the country till now in hilly areas of the country and the States where such railway lines have been constructed;

(b) whether his Ministry is formulating any special plan for constructing the railway lines in hilly areas of the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the details of such railway lines proposed under current plan period and Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) About 12,000 Kms of new lines have been constructed since 01.04.1951. No data demarcating hilly and non-hilly areas in maintained.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) No, Sir, However, a number of projects have been taken up for development of hilly, tribal, underdeveloped and backward areas of the country.

Rail connectivity to Jagdishpur

1296. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Jagdishpur is the second target town in Bhojpur district after Ara in Bihar, where seeds of independence were sown, do not have rail connection;

(b) if so, whether Government is considering for the same after celebrating 150 years of independence war of 1857; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Jagdishpur in Bhojpur district is not connected by a Railway line. However, Ara-Sasaram New Line, on completion, would provide rail connectivity to serve the people of this area as Jagdishpur is only about 20 km from this line.

Escalators at stations

1297. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has plan to install escalators at Secunderabad, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam railway stations in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so the steps proposed to complete such plans;

(c) whether Railways would provide trolleys for older people and physically challenged people at these stations; and

(d) in what manner Government would help passenger cross long distances at these railway stations alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU):

(a) and (b) Escalators are available at Vijayawada station. Escalators at Secunderabad will get included as part of its development as world class station. There is no proposal to provide escalators at Visakhapatnam station.

(c) and (d) Wheel chairs are available at Vijayawada, Secunderabad and Visakhapatnam station which can be used by older people and physically challenged persons. Such passenger can cross platforms by way of pathways provided at both ends of platforms at these stations. Foot-over-bridge (FOB) with ramp has also been provided for free movement of wheel chair.

Proposal to increase capacity of sleeper coaches

1298. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to increase capacity of 3-Tier sleeper coaches by at least 10 berths by re-designing coaches;

(b) whether it is a fact that safety organizations have objected to this proposal;